

"Every little piece of this waterfront had its own constituency. They would come to meetings with their own architects—they would say, 'By the way, we designed this dog-run here, and we want a fishing hole there.' These groups are very powerful."
—Richard Dattner, Dattner Architects (2007)

"Nothing is wrong with allowing a hot dog stand into the park, because it's a benefit to the park, but when you begin with the premise that the park has to be supported by commercial uses—then you stop looking at whether they're really a benefit."
—Stuart Waldman, Federation to Preserve the Greenwich Village Waterfront and Great Port (2004)

"I think there are legitimate differences of opinion about how the waterfront should be used, how the habitat should be protected, what sort of commercial uses should go into the park, how the park should be governed."
—Richard Kassel, Natural Resources Defense Council (1999)



Hudson River Park

NEW YORK CITY

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The Hudson River Park is the largest park to be built in Manhattan since Central Park and is the result of decades of planning efforts and public involvement. Spanning five miles along the Hudson River, this project includes the redevelopment of several derelict public piers, creation of a bikeway and waterside promenade, and construction of a series of connected public spaces designed in phases by four design teams.

When the elevated West Side Highway was damaged and subsequently closed in 1972, residents of neighboring communities began advocating for a new roadway that would revitalize the waterfront and create a large-scale park to reconnect the neighborhoods with the river. Twenty years later, the Hudson River Park Conservancy was created through a MOU between New York City and the State with a mandate to plan, permit and construct the Hudson River Park. From 1992 to 1995, the Conservancy worked with the State Department of Transportation to build a walkway and bike path along the new highway. It also carried out a public planning process, culminating in a *Concept and Financial Plan*.

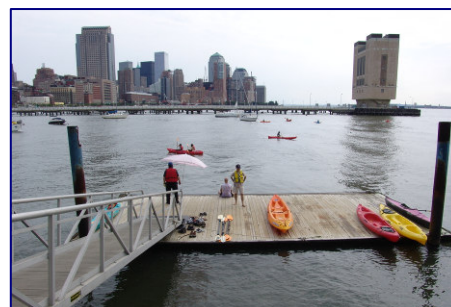
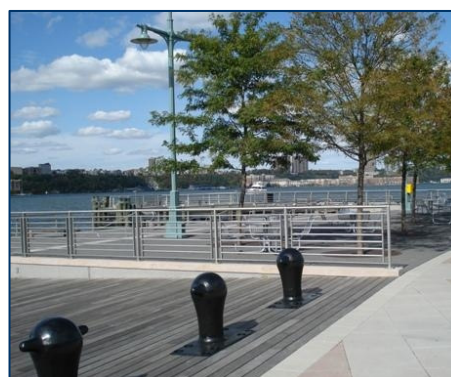
Because of the park's high cost and controversy over its environmental impact, its construction was stalled until Al Butzel, a well-connected, retired environmental lawyer, formed the Hudson River Park Alliance. Made up of the region's premier civic and environmental groups and led by Butzel, the Alliance built support and secured funding for the park from Governor Pataki, Mayor Giuliani and the state legislature.

In 1998, New York State adopted the Hudson River Park Act, despite environmental concerns from groups both within and outside of the Alliance. This legislation formally designated 550 acres for the park and established the Hudson River Park Trust as a partnership between NYC and the State. The Trust was charged with planning, building, managing and operating the park. Because of the project's large scale, the Trust divided the park into six segments to be designed by four teams. It also hired a firm to coordinate the park's overall design and oversee the teams.

In 2003, the first section of the park was completed and has since been credited with increasing the value of adjacent properties by 20 percent.

BASIC FACTS

Size:	150 acres + 400-acre marine sanctuary, along a 5-mile stretch
Location:	Manhattan's Upper West Side, from Battery to 59 th Street
Cost:	\$400M+ capital expenditures \$12M annual operating budget (\$20M/yr once park is complete)
Financing:	City: \$159M (39%) (FY 1999-2009) State: \$158M (39%) Federal: \$15M (4%) Lower Manhattan Development Corp: \$73M (18%)
Maintenance Funding	From commercial activities in the park, no public funding
Owner:	NY State and NYC, via Hudson River Park Trust
Manager:	Hudson River Park Trust
Features:	Waterside esplanade and bike path, public piers, boathouses, beaches, grassy areas, ball fields, fountains, public art, 'estuarium' educational center, concessions, Intrepid Air & Space Museum
Permanent Activities	Concerts, art performances, row boat building, water taxi, kayak rentals, passenger ferry terminal, free film screenings, carousel
Temporary Programming	Roller-skating rink, skate park, batting cages, trapeze school



Clockwise from above: Greenwich Village (Friends of Hudson River Park). Clinton Pier 84 (Friends of Hudson River Park). Kayaking at Pier 40 (NYC Parks & Rec).

Key Findings

General:

Like Seattle, the park project received both State and City funding; other basic characteristics are also similar.

Governance:

While a conservancy was initially used to develop a concept plan for the park and gain political support, the ultimate governing agency has been criticized for limiting public accountability for park decision-making. Public authorities are common in NY because they can issue bonds without voter approval; they are also known for making decisions without input from legislators or the public. This critique is particularly strong for the HRPT which is seen as being controlled by the governor.

Finances:

The park's maintenance and operations can be funded only by revenues generated by commercial activities in the park (per state law) creating two problems:

- (1) Reliance on commercial activities has created a perception of an "anything goes" approach to programming; and
- (2) Reliance on a single source for revenue increases the park's vulnerability to revenue shortfalls.

To address the park's projected funding shortfall, Friends of Hudson River Park is recommending the creation of a park benefit district, which would assess a fee on neighboring residential properties. In 2008, Friends estimated that a 16-cent-per-square-foot fee could raise \$5M annually for the park.

Design Process:

After drafting a concept plan and design guidelines, the park was divided into six segments to be designed by four independent teams. To unify the park, common design features and infrastructure standards were included in these early plans, with a centralized project manager responsible for coordinating the park's overall design. This approach created a holistic vision for the park, while encouraging the design teams' creativity.

Operations and maintenance issues were addressed during the park's design in the selection of materials and by creating a *Design Guidelines Master Plan*.

Programming:

During construction, temporary programming was created so people could see benefits from the project prior to the park's completion. However, some of these uses are controversial, increasing concern among neighborhood and environmental groups who fear that capital shortfalls will make these uses permanent.

Although efforts were made in the park's enabling legislation to limit commercialization, including such activities in the park has been controversial. The lack of clear criteria for what makes a commercial activity an acceptable use has led to speculation over the HRPT's decision-making process.

TIMELINE

1927	• Construction of the West Side Highway along waterfront begins; completed in 1948.
1977	• Demolition of West Side Highway begins; completed in 1989.
1992	• Hudson River Park Conservancy created via MOU between NYC and State. • NYDOT, with Conservancy, constructs walkway and bike path.
1995	• <i>Concept and Financial Plan</i> published by Conservancy.
1996	• Hudson River Park Alliance formed.
1997	• Design Guidelines Master Plan issued by Conservancy.
1998	• NY State adopts Hudson River Park Act, creating Hudson River Park Trust. • Project breaks ground on Greenwich Village section.
1999	• Friends of Hudson River Park founded to replace the disbanded Alliance.
2000	• Trust hires park-wide project management consultant.
2003	• Greenwich Village section complete (segment 4).
2004	• NY State Assembly conducts formal inquiry into the Trust's operations.
2005	• Clinton Cove Park opens (part of Segment 7). • State passes the Public Authorities Accountability Act of 2005.
2006	• Piers 66 and 84 open (Segment 6).
2008	• Northern part of Tribeca's park opens (part of Segment 3).



Top: Sunbathing at Pier 45, Greenwich Village (Hudson River Park Trust).
Bottom: Fountain on Pier 84, Midtown West (Hudson River Park Trust).

Hudson River Park

Segment 7: Clinton (44th Street to 59th Street)

This is the northernmost section, and the first to be developed on the city-owned portion of the project. It includes a large grassy area, "Clinton Cove", which features a boathouse and kayak launch at Pier 96, a get-down at Pier 95 for sitting near and enjoying the river, and eventually Pier 97, which will be primarily for active recreation and historic ships. Construction here cannot commence until Department of Sanitation trucks currently at that pier are relocated.

Segment 6: Chelsea North to Clinton South (26th Street to 44th Street)

This begins just north of Chelsea at 26th Street and continues to Pier 84. It will include a large ecological habitat area, two boathouses, a rocky beach, and a major civic plaza with fountain near 42nd Street. As well as the developments around Pier 84 and Pier 66 at 26th Street, Segment 6 also includes several continuing water-dependent uses, including Circle Line and World Yacht. A new ferry terminal at Pier 79 will bring commuters and other visitors to West Midtown.

Segment 5: Chelsea (Horatio Street to 25th Street)

Extending from the Gansevoort Peninsula to West 26th Street, Segment 5 will feature two expansive spaces for active and passive recreation, including a rocky shoreline, beach, a small boating facility and ballfields on the southern end, and a great sweeping lawn at the north. In addition, four public piers, including one (Pier 54) devoted to historic ships, will be reconstructed for public recreation. The Chelsea Piers Sports and Entertainment Complex will continue its operations on Piers 59, 60 and 61.

Segment 4: Greenwich Village (Clarkson Street to Horatio Street)

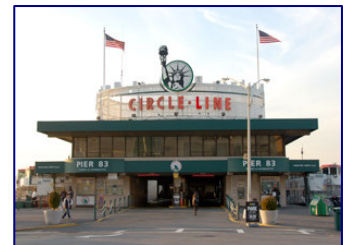
The Greenwich Village section features a large lawn on Pier 45, a recreation field on Pier 46 and a playground on Pier 51. The piers are linked to the rest of the park by a wide landscaped area, display fountain, garden area, food concession, dog run, and tree bosques.

Segment 3: Tribeca (Chambers Street to Clarkson Street)

To be funded by Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, construction on its two public piers, 25 and 26, begins in 2006. Pier 25 will be HRP's longest. Segment 3 is about the environment, and active recreation, as well as focusing on the Hudson itself through inclusion of the "estuarium" near Pier 26 and an ecological pier at Pier 32. Public facilities will include a boathouse, restaurant, children's playground, volleyball courts, an open lawn, mooring area, a mini golf course, and a skate park, all be linked by pathways and planted areas.

Segment 2 (Battery Place to Chambers Street)

Unlike the rest of the project, Segment 2 does not border the Hudson but instead runs along the eastern side of Battery Park City. Detailed design will not begin until final plans for reconstructing West Street in the World Trade Center area have been determined.



Map (Nigel Whale/HRPT). Photos, top to bottom: Sunbathing at Clinton Cove (Luca Vignelli/HRPT). Terminal for ferry to New Jersey, Pier 79 (HRPT). Circle Line sight-seeing cruises, Midtown West (HRPT). Sports fields at Chelsea Piers (HRPT). Synthetic turf lawn on Pier 46 with piles being preserved for fish habitat, Greenwich Village (Luca Vignelli/HRPT). Water taxis at Piers 45 and 84 offer tours, charters and commuter routes (HRPT). Hudson River Park Trust maintains the esplanade along the southernmost section of the park (HRPT).